

## REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY	Hungary
SUBJECT	Transportation - Rail
HOW PUBLISHED	Weekly newspaper
WHERE PUBLISHED	Budapest
DATE PUBLISHED	12 Aug 1951
LANGUAGE	Hungarian

DATE OF INFORMATION 1951

DATE DIST. 24 Dec 1951

NO. OF PAGES 3

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Kozlekedesi Kozlony, Vol VII, No 32, 1951.

HUNGARIAN RAILROAD IMPROVEMENTS FOR PEAK FALL TRAFFIC

Lajos Bebrits, Minister of Communications and Post, gave a detailed account of the extraordinary tasks confronting the Hungarian State Railroads in connection with the peak fall traffic at the National Conference of Railroad Workers, held at Budapest on 4 and 5 August 1951.

The minister emphasized that this year, substantially larger volumes of agricultural products, especially grains, fruit, vegetables, sugar beets, and potatoes, have to be transported by rail than in 1950. The sugar-beet crop, for example, is estimated to be 90-95 percent greater than last year's. At the same time, the volume of industrial products will increase 30 percent. Materials required for large construction projects and building activities will also contribute to the complex problems of rail transportation.

As a result, the number of freight cars to be loaded daily will increase from last year's 10,000 to 14,000-15,000. These requirements necessitate the reduction of car turnaround time to 3 days or less during the fall season.

Problems of fall traffic are threefold: endeavors of the enemy to hinder the success of the work must be defeated; slow railroad employees must be prodded; and necessary space and equipment must be made available prior to the beginning of fall traffic. The government and the party extended a helping hand to the railroad workers by making night, Sunday, and holiday loadings compulsory. This regulation must be enforced more strictly than last year, primarily in the country.

Although the rolling stock has not been increased substantially, the mechanical condition of locomotives is much better than in 1950, and trackage and installations have also shown improvement. New tracks were built and the number of industrial sidings was increased. Additional mechanical traffic-control equipment was also purchased, and new automatic safety devices were installed.

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Preparedness of the railroad is better than in 1950; the 130,000 employees have gained more experience and received more political indoctrination. Now the State Railroads have more female workers whose services will be available during the coming fall season. The existing work methods; however, should be improved, new methods should be introduced, and defects should be eliminated. Service based on a 24-hour traffic plan will soon be initiated and time spent on freight car repairs will be reduced with the introduction of two or three shifts. The overwhelming majority of the workers are well trained and ready for the peak fall season. Twelve million forints' worth of bonuses will be distributed among those who contribute most to the success of train operations.

After the minister's speech the conference accepted a resolution containing the following pledges of the workers:

1. Average car turnaround time will be reduced to 3.1-3.6 days in September, to 3.0-3.4 days in October, to 3.1-3.5 days in November and, if necessary, to less than 3 days.
2. In the 2,000-ton movement, 50,000 tons more will be transported daily, and the number of 2,000-ton trains will be increased to 250 daily.
3. During the peak season, 300 express freight trains will be operated daily.
4. Delays of freight trains will be reduced by 25-40 percent.
5. Average daily kilometer performance of locomotives will be increased to 155 kilometers, while the average daily kilometer performance of locomotives in the 500-kilometer movement will be boosted to 190 kilometers.
6. The number of fast trains will be increased to 150 daily.
7. Average speed of freight trains will be increased from last year's 14 kilometers per hour to 17.5 kilometers per hour.
8. Delays of passenger trains will be reduced to an over-all average of 4.5 percent, while delays of trains transporting workers will be reduced to one percent.
9. Freight car loading space will be increased gradually to 14.5 tons.
10. Damages to freight during transit will be reduced from the present 0.8 percent to 0.5 percent.
11. For better cooperation with shipping companies, the number of train-crew brigades will be increased to 1,200 by 15 December, and these brigades will be joined by 3,500 shipping enterprises.
12. Plans to save 150,000 tons of coal in 1951 will be completed with during the fall season, while savings in other materials and power will amount to 2-7 percent.
13. Average time to be spent on car repairs from September to November will be reduced from the present 7 percent to 5 percent.
14. The number of locomotives unfit for traffic will be reduced by 25 percent as compared to the second quarter of the year.
15. Washing of locomotives will be done after longer runs and eventually after runs of 10,000 kilometers per locomotive.

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16. For reasons of economy and speed, traffic will be carried out according to a 24-hour plan.

Gyorgy Csanadi, general director of the Hungarian State Railroads told the conference that while car loadings during the peak fall season will be increased by 30 percent, the freight-car stock will be enlarged by only 5 percent. The task of the railroad is so much greater, because the large-scale traffic must be carried out economically. During the fall season, priority of freight over passenger traffic, resulting in delays of passenger and commuter trains, cannot be tolerated again.

Freight trains and cars are not being utilized advantageously. Car turnaround time must be reduced and loitering and wasting of time must be eliminated.

To ensure the success of the peak traffic season, stern regulations are needed, but enforcement will be elastic. For example, uniform loading deadlines will not be established on all goods. At the same time, the railroad will effectively assist the shippers in loading and unloading and, where feasible, it will assume the responsibility of loading. The railroad will give advice to shippers in advance, especially where agricultural goods are involved.

Finally, the general director called upon the railroad workers to enter into competitions to assure the success of the fall traffic season.

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